

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO EC COLLECTIVE

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USEEC ALSO FOR EMBASSY

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: PGOV EEC DA US
SUBJ: DENMARK'S EC DECISION MAKING PROCESS

1. DENMARK'S DECISION-MAKING MACHINERY WITH RESPECT TO EC COMMISSION PROPOSALS HAS GENERATED CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN OTHER EC COUNTRIES, INSPIRING VISITS FROM THEIR PARLIAMENTARIANS. THE ECONOMIST RECENTLY PRINTED A SHORT ARTICLE WHICH HELD UP THE DANISH MODEL AS A GOOD ONE FOR THE BRITISH.

2. GIVEN THIS INTEREST IN THE DANISH SYSTEM, WE HAVE PREPARED AN AIRGRAM (A-99 WHICH WILL BE TRANSMITTED DEC 16) WHICH DESCRIBES THE PROCESS IN DETAIL. THIS AIRGRAM HAS BEEN SENT TO ALL ADDRESSEES OF THIS TELEGRAM.

3. PENDING RECEIPT, THE FOLLOWING SUMMARY REMARKS MAY BE OF INTEREST:

A. IN ESSENCE THE DANISH SYSTEM IS A SIMPLE ONE OF FOUR LEVELS THAT EMBODIS BOTH DELIBERATION AND SPEED. SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF EXPERTS PRONOUNCE ON THE MERITS OF THE PROPOSALS SOON AFTER THEY ARE RECEIVED FROM THE COMMISSION AND SEND THEM ALONG TO GOVERN-
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MENT BODIES CAPABLE OF TAKING EXECUTIVE DECISIONS. THE GOVERNMENT IN TURN REACHES AN AGREED POSITION WITH THE PARLIAMENT THROUGH A STANDING COMMITTEE THAT EXPRESSES PARLIAMENT'S WILL. THIS PRIOR INVOLVEMENT OF THE PARLIAMENT ENABLES DANISH MINISTERS TO PRESENT A DANISH POSITION FULLY AND AUTHORITATIVELY AT THE TIME THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS COME BEFORE THE COUNCIL FOR DECISION.

B. SOME PEOPLE HAVE QUESTIONED WHETHER AN OCCASIONAL DANISH PRACTICE IN CONNECTION WITH ITS DECISION-MAKING PROCESS MIGHT NOT BE SEIZED ON TO STALL EC MACHINERY. THIS PRACTICE IS THE PLACING OF A "WAITING RESERVE" IN THE EC COUNCIL WHEN THE DANISH DECISION MACHINE HAS NOT HAD TIME TO PROCESS A COMMISSION PROPOSAL. WHILE IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SUCH A PRACTICE COULD BE USED BY OTHERS TO HAMSTRING THE COMMUNITIES, THAT HAS CLEARLY NOT BEEN THE RESULT IN THE DANISH CASE. THE DANES HAVE EMPLOYED THIS "TEMPORARY VETO" ONLY ON RAR OCCASIONS WHEN EC PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN PLACED ON THE COUNCIL AGENDA WITHOUT THE CUSTOMARY LEAD TIME AND THEREFORE NOT SUFFICIENT FOR THE DANISH GOVERNMENT TO BRING THE MATTER BEFORE THE PARLIAMENTARY MARKET COMMITTEE. THE GOVERNMENT HAS, HOWEVER, PUT SUCH PROPOSALS BEFORE THAT COMMITTEE AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY AND HAS QUICKLY, WE ARE TOLD, LIFTED THE "WAITING RESERVE" IN THE COUNCIL, ENABLING THAT BODY TO PROCEED WITH DISCUSSIONS.
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